

REMARKS

Claims 1-11 and 26 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 27-29 are canceled without disclaimer of or prejudice to the subject matter set forth therein.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 1-11 and 26 contain allowable subject matter.

The Office Action variously rejects claims 27-29 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent 5,952,799 to Maisch et al. in view of U.S. Patent 5,979,999 to Poertzgen et al. and over Maisch in view of WO 98/28174 to Jonner et al. While Applicants do not necessarily agree with these rejections, Applicants submit that claims 27-29 have been canceled. Accordingly, these rejections should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-11 and 26 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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